

Paratype male 10; Loja, Ecuador: Paratype male 11; Rio Num-bala, Ecuador: Paratype male 12; San Francisco, Ecuador: Paratype male 13; Rio Verde, Ecuador 5000 feet; 10-13 in British Museum, London, England.

Paratype male 14; Equito, Ecuador: Paratype male 15; no data; both in the Zoological Museum, Tring, England.

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## A MODIFICATION OF THE FEEDING REACTION OF AESCHNA.

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Last summer a student brought into the laboratory the larva of some species of aeschnid dragonfly. It occurred to me that it might be interesting to discover what would happen to the insect with the labium removed. I therefore ligated the organ close to the head, and amputated the structure just distad of the ligation. The insect did not appear to suffer seriously from the operation, as it lived for about a month longer.

Of course without the extensible labium the insect could not capture prey, and at first it made no reaction even to food brought close to the head. After a few days it consumed food placed in the mandibles. A little later it moved toward the food offered, at first rather indifferently, but later with all the activity characteristic of the normal insect.

Suddenly it developed the habit of "leaping" on its prey: that is, upon seeing a moving object two or three centimeters away, it would first turn to face the object; then, by a forcible ejection of water from the brachial sack, it would move rapidly upon the object, at the same time "snapping" at it with the jaws. This maneuver, awkward as it was, occasionally resulted in a capture.

It would be interesting to experiment further with a number of specimens to discover if such modifications in behavior are general, but unfortunately, at the time, I was unable to obtain other specimens. In any case such a striking alteration in behavior to meet a contingency which practically cannot occur to a specimen living under field conditions illustrates the remarkable flexibility in the behavior of an animal generally supposed to depend entirely upon reactions which are inherited, automatic, and fixed.